

Bologna work programme 2007-2009 (draft version)

TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA - AN INTEGRATED WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2007-2009

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

1.3 Developments over the last two years have brought us a significant step closer to the realisation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Building on our rich and diverse European cultural heritage, we are developing an EHEA based on institutional autonomy, academic freedom, equal opportunities and democratic principles that will facilitate mobility, increase employability and strengthen Europe's attractiveness and competitiveness. [...] We agree to continue to work together in partnership, assisting one another in our efforts and promoting the exchange of good practice.

Introduction

To make the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) become a reality, it is of utmost importance to make progress on the implementation of the commitments that have already been agreed, concerning all action lines from all declarations and communiqués. Most of this activity needs to take place at the national level but it can and will be supported by action at the European level.

This document is an attempt to draw up a work programme precisely for this action at European level for the period 2007-2009, covering all action lines referred to in the London Communiqué. It is an ambitious programme that builds upon the various proposals submitted by almost 40 countries and organisations.

Structured coordination between countries and organisations as well as across action lines will be crucial to turn it into an integrated work programme, rather than a loose set of isolated events.

This also includes the question of timing. Given the large number of seminars proposed, it is of particular importance that those seminars are spread equally across the entire working period. In view of the early date of next Ministerial conference, 28-29 April 2009, results of working groups and seminars should be largely available by the beginning of 2009. That means seminars could and should take place between October 2007 and January 2009.

As far as working groups are concerned, it is important that they do not work in isolation but rather cooperate with other working groups and liaise with BFUG as a whole. For this purpose, minutes of working group meetings should be made available to BFUG shortly after the meetings.

Last but not least, cooperation should involve all countries and organisations participating in the Bologna Process. It is strongly recommended that working groups aim at a composition that is more balanced in geographical terms than it was in previous periods; and it would be highly desirable to also achieve a better geographical distribution of Bologna seminars. One solution could be that countries proposing a seminar agree to organise it in a region that so far has been underrepresented and cooperate with a country in that region that is willing to host the seminar.

MOBILITY

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.2 Mobility of staff, students and graduates is one of the core elements of the Bologna Process, creating opportunities for personal growth, developing international cooperation between individuals and institutions, enhancing the quality of higher education and research, and giving substance to the European dimension.

2.3 Some progress has been made since 1999, but many challenges remain. Among the obstacles to mobility, issues relating to immigration, recognition, insufficient financial incentives and inflexible pension arrangements feature prominently. We recognise the responsibility of individual Governments to facilitate the delivery of visas, residence and work permits, as appropriate. Where these measures are outside our competence as Ministers for Higher Education, we undertake to work within our respective Governments for decisive progress in this area. At national level, we will work to implement fully the agreed recognition tools and procedures and consider ways of further incentivising mobility for both staff and students. This includes encouraging a significant increase in the number of joint programmes and the creation of flexible curricula, as well as urging our institutions to take greater responsibility for staff and student mobility, more equitably balanced between countries across the EHEA.

3.2 In our national reports for 2009, we will report on action taken at national level to promote the mobility of students and staff, including measures for future evaluation. We will focus on the main national challenges identified in paragraph 2.3 above. We also agree to set up a network of national experts to share information, and help to identify and overcome obstacles to the portability of grants and loans.

General remarks

Mobility of students and staff was one of the central elements of the Bologna Declaration signed in 1999 and has entailed structural reforms of the degree system in 3 cycles. Nevertheless, reliable and comparable data to monitor progress on mobility are still lacking. Obstacles to mobility of students and staff are well-known and include: different academic calendars, difficulties related to temporarily leaving one's job, family duties, lack of encouragement, language barriers or simply lack of information. The London Communiqué mentions the prominent and maybe most pressing issues of immigration, recognition, insufficient financial incentives and inflexible pension arrangements.

So a lot remains to be done and with the 2010 deadline approaching, a certain sense of urgency prevails. While most of the action needs to be taken at national or institutional level, they can be supported in various ways by action at European level, for instance through awareness-raising or sharing of good practice but also through work on other action lines, such as developing joint programmes or cooperating in the field of quality assurance. In fact, to effectively promote mobility, action is not only needed across action lines but also across policy areas, as many of the issues go beyond the scope of higher education and reach into the areas of social affairs, finances, immigration (including visas, residence and work permits) etc. So there clearly is a case for an integrated approach, integrating different policy areas as well as different types of activity. At the same time, this integrated approach needs to be flexible enough to meet the different needs of the different countries involved in the Bologna Process. Specific questions related to EU legislation, which concern EU countries only, should however be dealt with in the EU context.

Action included in this Bologna work programme for the time leading to the 2009 ministerial conference should ideally involve all participating countries and organisations and the area of mobility certainly is a case where a joint effort of all parties is needed. As indicated in the London Communiqué, mobility should be one of the priorities of the Bologna work programme 2007-2009 and BFUG is therefore asked to launch a mobility campaign, combining a variety of activities organised by a variety of Bologna countries and consultative members.

| Coordination group | | |
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| <p><u>Purpose</u>: to coordinate the follow-up activities in the field of mobility.</p> <p><u>Liaison with other follow-up activities</u>: data collection, stocktaking (in line with 3.7 of the London Communiqué), global dimension, social dimension</p> | <p><u>Chair</u>: to be agreed among those countries and organisations that expressed interest</p> <p><u>Expressed interest</u>: EI, ESU, Armenia, Austria, Belgium/French Community, Hungary, Malta, Portugal</p> | <p><u>Timing and reporting</u>: Regular updates to BFUG. Minutes on the website. Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009 Final report (final version): 1 March 2009</p> |
| Mobility Campaign | | |
| <p><u>Campaign materials</u> to raise awareness; spread information; encourage students and staff to get mobile (and HEI to let them go).</p> | <p><u>Organisers</u>: EI, ESU, in consultation with the coordination group (see above)</p> | <p><u>Timing</u>: November 2007- October 2008</p> |
| <p><u>Website</u> to allow students and staff to exchange information, experience, good and bad practice</p> | <p><u>Organisers</u>: EI, ESU, in consultation with the coordination group</p> | |
| <p><u>Mobility barometer</u> (using questionnaires) to measure progress on mobility</p> | <p><u>Organisers</u>: EI and ESU, in consultation with the coordination group</p> | |
| <p><u>Validation conference</u> to conclude the campaign</p> | <p><u>Organisers</u>: EI and ESU, in consultation with the coordination group</p> | <p><u>Timing</u>: October 2008 <u>Place</u>: Lille (France)</p> |
| Bologna seminars | | |
| <p><u>Seminar</u> on the role of joint curricula in student mobility</p> | <p><u>Organisers</u>: Russia, in consultation with the coordination group</p> | <p><u>Date</u>: first half of 2008 <u>Place</u>: Moscow (Russia)</p> |
| <p><u>Conference</u> on different aspects of mobility</p> | <p><u>Organisers</u>: French Community of Belgium, in consultation with the coordination group</p> | <p><u>Date</u>: May 2008 <u>Place</u>: Brussels (Belgium)</p> |
| <p><u>Seminar</u> on staff mobility and pension arrangements</p> | <p><u>Organisers</u>: Germany, in consultation with the coordination group</p> | <p><u>Date</u>: to be confirmed <u>Place</u>: to be confirmed</p> |
| Related events | | |
| <p><u>Conference on Transnational Mobility</u> that will focus on empiric data of student mobility and present results of a study on experiences and expectations of German employers regarding</p> | <p><u>Organiser</u>: German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) <u>Participants</u>: about 100 participants from Austria, Belgium, Finland, France,</p> | <p><u>Date</u>: 25-26 October 2007 <u>Place</u>: Berlin (Germany)</p> |

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| graduates holding a Bachelor degree | Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Switzerland | |
| Network of national experts on portability of grants and loans | | |
| <u>Purpose:</u> to identify and overcome obstacles to the portability of grants and loans <u>Liaison with other follow-up activities:</u> Mobility coordination group, social dimension, stocktaking | <u>Chair:</u> Netherlands <u>Participants:</u> open to all Bologna countries, so far the following countries and organisations have already joined: Armenia, Austria, Belgium/French Community, Georgia, Germany, Lithuania, Montenegro, Sweden, UK (England and Scotland), possibly Switzerland, ESU, European Commission | <u>Timing and reporting:</u> Start-up meeting in the second half of 2007. Regular updates to BFUG. Minutes on the website. Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009 Final report (final version): 1 March 2009 |

DEGREE STRUCTURE

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.4 [...] We underline the importance of curricula reform leading to qualifications better suited both to the needs of the labour market and to further study. Efforts should concentrate in future on removing barriers to access and progression between cycles and on proper implementation of ECTS based on learning outcomes and student workload. We underline the importance of improving graduate employability, whilst noting that data gathering on this issue needs to be developed further.

General remarks

Proper implementation of ECTS based on student workload and learning outcomes still remains a priority. The European Commission currently is in a process of consulting the network of national academic contact points in order to update the ECTS Key Features and subsequently also the ECTS Users' Guide. BFUG is asked to contribute to the debate. One central aim of the exercise is to integrate the concept of learning outcomes into ECTS.

The questions of employability and data gathering will be dealt with in separate sections (see below).

Bologna Seminars

Seminar to develop a common understanding of learning outcomes

Organisers: Portugal, EURASHE, ESU

Date: mid 2008?

Place: Portugal

Seminar on ECTS based on learning outcomes and student workload

Organisers: Russia in cooperation with Malta

Date: early 2009

Place: Saint-Petersburg, Russia

Liaison with other follow-up activities: take into account the ECTS discussion and liaise with groups working on QF, LLL and employability.

Consultation on ECTS Key Features

Purpose: Updating ECTS Key Features, mainly to integrate learning outcomes.

Liaison with other follow-up activities: QF, LLL, qualifications framework, stocktaking

Organisers: European Commission, supported by the national academic contact points for ECTS

Participants: All BFUG members

Timing: New draft of ECTS Key Features to be distributed in September for discussion at Lisbon BFUG 2-3 October.

On that basis, the ECTS Users Guide will be updated in 2008.

Related activities

Seminar on the structure of medical studies in Europe

Organiser: Germany

Date: to be confirmed

Place: to be confirmed

EMPLOYABILITY

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

3.5 Following up on the introduction of the three-cycle degree system, we ask BFUG to consider in more detail how to improve employability in relation to each of these cycles as well as in the context of lifelong learning. This will involve the responsibilities of all stakeholders. Governments and HEIs will need to communicate more with employers and other stakeholders on the rationale for their reforms. We will work, as appropriate, within our governments to ensure that employment and career structures within the public service are fully compatible with the new degree system. We urge institutions to further develop partnerships and cooperation with employers in the ongoing process of curriculum innovation based on learning outcomes.

General remarks

Employability also is a multidimensional topic and is related to curriculum issues as well as to monitoring the employment of graduates of all 3 cycles, not least in the public service. All items mentioned in the London Communiqué should be taken on board in an integrated approach. In order to increase the employers' interest in and awareness of the Bologna Process, it would be desirable to have BUSINESSEUROPE on board for this action line. Special attention should also be paid to small and medium-sized enterprises. Countries and organisations that had offered to coordinate a follow-up activity were asked to cooperate and to develop an integrated proposal. In the following, the main elements of this proposal will be listed. The details would still need to be specified at the first meeting of the proposed coordination/working group.

Working group / Coordination group

Purpose: To report to BFUG on how to improve employability in relation to each of the three cycles as well as in the context of lifelong learning. To promote good practice in a range of areas, including

- involving employers in devising curricula;
- provision of careers services;
- employment and career structures within the public service that are fully compatible with the new degree system;
- curriculum innovation based on learning outcomes;
- awareness-raising amongst employers of the value of a bachelors qualification and associated learning outcomes; and
- the recognition of degrees in the labour market across Europe.

Chair: UK

Participants: Austria, Belgium/ French Community, Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Spain, EI, EURASHE, ESU, EUA.

Timing and reporting:

First meeting in October or November 2007.
 Regular updates to BFUG.
 Minutes on the website.
 Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009
 Final report (final version): 1 March 2009

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| <u>Liaison with other follow-up activities:</u> Work on learning outcomes in context of degree structure and qualifications frameworks, LLL, data collection, stocktaking | | |
| Bologna Seminars | | |
| Possible conference/seminar that focuses on the perspective of employers | <u>Organisers:</u> to be decided among members of the coordination group | <u>Date:</u> to be confirmed <u>Place:</u> to be confirmed |
| Possible seminar on employability of Bachelor graduates. | <u>Organisers:</u> to be decided among members of the coordination group | <u>Date:</u> to be confirmed <u>Place:</u> to be confirmed |
| Related activities | | |
| Possible other follow-up activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National surveys on employability - Report on existing studies on employability. - Development of materials for dissemination. | <u>Organisers:</u> Working / Coordination group | |

RECOGNITION

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.6 There has been progress in the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC), ECTS and diploma supplements, but the range of national and institutional approaches to recognition needs to be more coherent. To improve recognition practices, we therefore ask the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) to arrange for the ENIC/NARIC networks to analyse our national action plans and spread good practice.

General remarks

The ENIC/NARIC networks have received the mandate to analyse the national action plans. It is important that BFUG be informed of and have an opportunity to comment on the analysis. The implementation of the action plans and the dissemination of good practice should be the focus of attention of national information centres (ENICs/NARICs) as well as of other competent recognition authorities and policy makers (higher education institutions, public authorities, specialized recognition bodies). The ENIC and NARIC Networks are currently working to develop a better common understanding of the concept of “substantial differences”, which is one of the key concepts of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and a possible justification for non-recognition. The aim is to develop a broader view of substantial differences, so that only major differences entail non-recognition, and, as far as possible, to seek to assess substantial differences in terms of learning outcomes.

The follow-up activities on recognition of prior learning (2.11) will be dealt with in the section on “lifelong learning” (see below).

ENIC-NARIC working party

Tasks: To analyse national action plans on recognition and to spread good practice. To assist Bologna countries with implementing the national action plans and to identify possible weak points.

Organisers: ENIC and NARIC Networks
Participants: Council of Europe, European Commission, UNESCO-CEPES, national information centres. Through the networks, national recognition information centres of all Bologna countries will discuss the report.

Timing: November 2007-December 2008
Reporting:
 Progress report at BFUG March 2008.
 A first draft report will be considered by the ENIC and NARIC Networks at their joint meeting in Malta in June 2008.
 A final report will be submitted to the BFUG and the ENIC and NARIC Networks by the end of 2008.

QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.8 We note that some initial progress has been made towards the implementation of national qualifications frameworks, but that much more effort is required. We commit ourselves to fully implementing such national qualifications frameworks, certified against the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA, by 2010. Recognising that this is a challenging task, we ask the Council of Europe to support the sharing of experience in the elaboration of national qualifications frameworks. We emphasise that qualification frameworks should be designed so as to encourage greater mobility of students and teachers and improve employability.

General remarks

The main work of implementing national qualifications frameworks in line with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA needs to be done at national level but it will be supported by the sharing of experience, facilitated by the Council of Europe and by other organisers of European or regional conferences. Particular attention should be given to integrating ECTS into this work. The European conferences and some of the regional conferences will be coordinated by the Council of Europe. Countries are, however, encouraged to organise additional conferences at regional or national level at their own initiative. Council of Europe and coordination group may assist with identifying international experts.

Coordination Group

Purpose: To assist the Council of Europe in coordinating the sharing of experience, to allow a number of countries and consultative members a formal role in providing advice on this and to ensure the involvement of countries at different stages of the development of their national frameworks.

Tasks: the Coordination Group shall act as a forum for debate on qualifications frameworks and give advice on:

- activities designed to promote the sharing of experience in the development of national qualifications frameworks;
- specific issues relating to the development of NQFs, their purposes, relationship to credits, qualifications, learning outcomes and curriculum reform, as well as issues of content, methodology and procedure, as appropriate;
- experts that might assist countries in the development of their national frameworks,

Chair and Secretariat: Council of Europe

Participants: 10-15

- 1 representative of the European Commission
- 1 representative of the Bologna working group on qualifications frameworks 2003 – 2007 (expressed interest: “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)
- 1 representative of a country that has completed the self certification process (expressed interest: UK/Scotland)
- 3 - 4 repres. of other Bologna member states at various stages of the development of their NQFs, with some regard also to geographical representation (expressed interest: Czech Republic, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Turkey)
- 2 - 3 repres. of consultative members
- 1 representative of the ENIC and NARIC Networks or the Lisboa Recognition Convention Committee
- 1 representative of the Bologna Secretariat

Timing:

Late 2007 until first BFUG after the 2009 ministerial conference

Meeting at least twice a year

Reporting:

Regular updates to BFUG.

Minutes on Bologna website.

Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009

Final report (final version): 1 March 2009

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| <p>where such assistance is requested. The Coordination Group shall seek to ensure that experts represent a variety of backgrounds and experience;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • methodology and procedures for the self-certification of completed national frameworks, including (on request) identifying suitable foreign experts who might participate in self-certification exercises; • the publication of self-certification reports; • cooperation with the European Commission with a view to ensuring that national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching framework for the EHEA are also compatible with the European Qualifications Framework; • public information designed to promote the elaboration of national qualifications frameworks; • activities and material designed to ensure compatibility between the overarching EHEA framework and the EQF; <p><u>Liaison with other follow-up activities:</u></p> <p>The Coordination Group shall give advice on the relationship between the development of qualifications frameworks and other key policy areas within the Bologna Process, in particular as concerns the recognition of qualifications and the use of the agreed transparency tools (ECTS, Diploma Supplement).</p> <p>The Coordination Group shall also assist the Bologna Secretariat and the Stocktaking Group in gaining an overview of the state of developments of national qualifications frameworks in time for the 2009 stocktaking exercise.</p> | | |
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| European conferences | | |
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| <p><u>Forum on Qualifications Frameworks</u> to give countries an opportunity to draw on the experience of other countries outside of their immediate region that may face similar issues, and to give the BFUG at least an impressionistic overview of overall progress in the development of national frameworks compatible with the overarching EHEA framework.</p> | <p><u>Organiser:</u> Council of Europe <u>Participants:</u> Those responsible for developing NQFs in all Bologna countries; European Commission and consultative members; possibly also a limited number from non-EHEA countries; national information centres on recognition (ENICs/NARICs)</p> | <p><u>Date:</u> 11-12 October 2007 <u>Place:</u> Council of Europe Headquarters, Strasbourg (France)</p> |
| <p><u>Follow-up conference(s)</u> could focus on specific topics in the development of qualifications frameworks, such as learning outcomes or the self certification process.</p> | <p><u>Organisers:</u> Council of Europe, together with host countries (Georgia, UK/Scotland, possibly Czech Republic) <u>Participants:</u> Those responsible for developing NQFs in all Bologna countries; European Commission and consultative members; possibly also a limited number from non-EHEA countries; national information centres on recognition (ENICs/NARICs)</p> | <p><u>Timing:</u> one or two conferences in 2008 and possibly also one in early 2009</p> |
| Regional conferences | | |
| <p><u>Purpose:</u> To exchange experience – either within a certain region or with countries that are at a similar stage in developing their national qualifications frameworks. <u>Please note:</u> Countries are encouraged to organise additional conferences at national or regional level at their own initiative.</p> | <p><u>Organisers:</u> Host countries supported by Council of Europe <u>Expressed interest:</u> Armenia, Czech Republic <u>Participants:</u> Mainly those responsible for developing NQFs in the countries concerned</p> | |

LIFELONG LEARNING

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.11 The stocktaking report shows that some elements of flexible learning exist in most countries, but a more systematic development of flexible learning paths to support lifelong learning is at an early stage. We therefore ask BFUG to increase the sharing of good practice and to work towards a common understanding of the role of higher education in lifelong learning. Only in a small number of EHEA countries could the recognition of prior learning for access and credits be said to be well developed. Working in cooperation with ENIC/NARIC, we invite BFUG to develop proposals for improving the recognition of prior learning.

General remarks

Countries and organisations that had offered to coordinate a follow-up activity were asked to cooperate and to prepare a joint proposal, which currently is still in the making. The follow-up activities in the field of lifelong learning need to cover two elements:

- (a) the role of higher education in lifelong learning and
- (b) the recognition of prior learning.

It is important not to regard lifelong learning as a separate action line but rather to consider all other action lines from a lifelong perspective.

Coordination group

Purpose: to coordinate the follow-up activities on lifelong learning

Liaison with other follow-up activities:
Recognition, QF, employability, stocktaking

Chair: to be agreed among those countries and organisations that expressed interest

Expressed interest: Georgia, Netherlands, UK/Scotland, Slovenia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", ESU, EUA, EURASHE, ENIC-NARIC

Timing and reporting:

Regular updates to BFUG.
Minutes on the website.

Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009
Final report (final version): 1 March 2009

Bologna Seminars

EU Presidency Conference on the role of universities in LLL (common understanding of what is LLL in HE), organisational aspects of LLL provision in universities and the link with qualifications frameworks

Organiser: Slovenia, in consultation with the coordination group

Participants: all Bologna countries

Date: March 2008

Place: Slovenia

Seminar(s) dealing with various aspects of LLL

- the role of higher education institutions in lifelong learning.
- the interdependency of qualifications frameworks, recognition of prior learning and flexible learning paths;
- quality assurance of recognition of prior

Organisers: to be agreed among members of the coordination group;

Expressed interest: Netherlands and UK/Scotland

Date: to be confirmed

Place: to be confirmed

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| <p>learning, transparent procedures (at the level of education institutions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of recognition of prior learning (organisation beyond higher education institutions, centres of expertise and cooperation between HEI and employers (site visits)) • flexibility of curricula • the relationship between the social dimension and lifelong learning; | | |
| Related activities | | |
| EUA autumn conference on the role of universities in LLL | <u>Organiser:</u> EUA (in consultation with the coordination group) | <u>Date:</u> October 2008 <u>Place:</u> Rotterdam (Netherlands) |

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.13 [...] We encourage the four organisations to continue to organise European Quality Assurance Fora on an annual basis, to facilitate the sharing of good practice and ensure that quality in the EHEA continues to improve.

2.14 [...] We ask the E4 group to report progress to us regularly through BFUG, and to ensure that after two years of operation, the register is evaluated externally, taking account of the views of all stakeholders.

General remarks

The register is expected to be operational by summer 2008, which means that the external evaluation would not be due before the second half of 2010.

Register of European Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies

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| | <u>Organisers:</u> E4 group (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE) | <u>Timing:</u> to be set up by summer 2008 <u>Reporting:</u> Regular progress reports to BFUG and final report in 2009 to ministerial conference. Minutes on Bologna website. Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009 Final report (final version): 1 March 2009 |
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European Quality Assurance Fora

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| <u>Purpose:</u> To facilitate the sharing of good practice <u>Specific objectives of the 2007 Forum:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain an understanding of how to implement the European Standards and Guidelines and to explore some of the underlying principles. • To analyse success factors and obstacles • To grasp the implications of such an implementation and examine the impact and the unintended consequences • To discuss specific tools (such as student evaluations, implementing learning outcomes, reviews of QA agencies) | <u>Organisers:</u> E4 group | <u>Second European Quality Assurance Forum</u> <u>Date:</u> 15-17 November 2007 <u>Place:</u> Rome <u>Third European Quality Assurance Forum</u> <u>Date:</u> autumn 2008 <u>Place:</u> to be confirmed |
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| Related activities | | |
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| <p><u>Conference</u> to stimulate mutual recognition of qualifications, based on accreditation and quality assurance decisions, and to enhance the international cooperation between agencies, ENIC/NARICs, and other stakeholders. This conference is a follow up to the ECA conference on the benefits of mutual recognition, taking place in Barcelona on 10 and 11 December 2007.</p> | <p><u>Organisers:</u> ECA (in cooperation with the Netherlands). ECA also seeks cooperation with the ENIC/NARIC networks but the precise form of this cooperation still needs to be discussed. <u>Participants:</u> Representatives of recognition authorities (ENIC/NARICs), accreditation and quality assurance agencies, governments, institutions, students, and employers</p> | <p><u>Date:</u> end of 2008? <u>Place:</u> to be confirmed</p> |

THIRD CYCLE / DOCTORAL CANDIDATES

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.17 We invite EUA to continue to support the sharing of experience among HEIs on the range of innovative doctoral programmes that are emerging across Europe as well as on other crucial issues such as transparent access arrangements, supervision and assessment procedures, the development of transferable skills and ways of enhancing employability. We will look for appropriate opportunities to encourage greater exchange of information on funding and other issues between our Governments as well as with other research funding bodies.

Bologna Seminar

Seminar on doctoral candidates to exchange information on funding and the development of career prospects

Liaison with other follow-up activities: Liaise with EUA and take into account results of previous seminars (Salzburg and Nice)

Organiser: Finland

Date: October 2008?

Place: Finland

Related activities

EUA Council of Doctoral Education

Organiser: EUA

Expressed interest: EI, ESU

Regular reports to BFUG

SOCIAL DIMENSION

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.18 Higher education should play a strong role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and raising the level of knowledge, skills and competences in society. Policy should therefore aim to maximise the potential of individuals in terms of their personal development and their contribution to a sustainable and democratic knowledge-based society. We share the societal aspiration that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations. We reaffirm the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. We therefore continue our efforts to provide adequate student services, create more flexible learning pathways into and within higher education, and to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity.

3.3 Similarly, we will report on our national strategies and policies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to evaluate their effectiveness. We will invite all stakeholders to participate in, and support this work, at the national level.

General remarks

The London Communiqué has highlighted the social dimension as one of the priorities for the period 2007-2009. While many actions have to be taken at national level, countries may find it useful to receive advice on developing national strategies, including national action plans, and to share experience with other countries. As a first step towards developing a European strategy for the social dimension in higher education, the work on data collection in the period 2007-2009 will mainly focus on the social dimension (see also section on data collection below). Last but not least it needs to be stressed that the social dimension is a cross-cutting issue that should be taken into account in all action lines.

Advisory group

Purpose: to design a template for national action plans, to assist countries in drawing up their national action plans, and to facilitate the sharing of experience

Liaison with other follow-up activities: data collection, stocktaking (in line with paragraph 3.7 of the London Communiqué, see also section on stocktaking), and LLL

Chair: to be agreed among those countries and organisations that expressed interest
Expressed interest: Belgium / French Community, Lithuania, Portugal, ESU, EUA

Timing and reporting:

Template for national action plans to be submitted to BFUG by 1 February 2008 for approval at the BFUG meeting in March 2008.
Regular progress reports to BFUG.
Minutes on Bologna website.
Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009
Final report (final version): 1 March 2009

Bologna seminar

International workshop on "Collection and interpretation of data on the social dimension in higher education"

Organisers: Eurostudent and UNESCO-CEPES in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Youth of Romania

Date: 5-6 November 2007
Place: Bucharest (Romania)

GLOBAL DIMENSION

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

2.20 We adopt the strategy “The European Higher Education Area in a Global Setting” and will take forward work in the core policy areas: improving information on, and promoting the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA; strengthening cooperation based on partnership; intensifying policy dialogue; and improving recognition. This work ought to be seen in relation to the OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education.

3.6 We ask BFUG to report back to us on overall developments in this area at the European, national and institutional levels by 2009. All stakeholders have a role here within their spheres of responsibility. In reporting on the implementation of the strategy for the EHEA in a global context, BFUG should in particular give consideration to two priorities. First, to improve the information available about the EHEA, by developing the Bologna Secretariat website and building on EUA's Bologna Handbook; and second, to improve recognition. We call on HEIs, ENIC/NARIC centres and other competent recognition authorities within the EHEA to assess qualifications from other parts of the world with the same open mind with which they would expect European qualifications to be assessed elsewhere, and to base this recognition on the principles of the LRC.

General remarks

To implement the strategy “The European Higher Education Area in a Global Setting”, action needs to be taken at European, national and institutional level in all five policy areas mentioned in the Communiqué, also including the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education. In the report to be prepared for 2009, a particular focus will be placed on the two areas of improving information on, and promoting the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA and of improving recognition. Given that Ministers asked for a further development of the qualitative analysis in stocktaking in relation to the Bologna Process in a global context, it is important that the preparation of this report is coordinated with the work of the stocktaking working group.

Working group “European Higher Education in a Global Setting”

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| <p><u>Purpose / Tasks:</u></p> <p>(a) to take forward work in the five core policy areas of the strategy with a special focus on “improving information on, and promoting the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA” and on “improving recognition”;</p> <p>(b) to prepare a draft report on the overall development at the European, national and institutional levels.</p> <p><u>Liaison with other follow-up activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stocktaking (in line with 3.7 of the London Communiqué), mobility and quality assurance • Cooperate with the Secretariat regarding the development of the Bologna Secretariat | <p>Chair: Austria</p> <p>Participants: Armenia (to be confirmed), Belgium/French Community, Germany, Holy See, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovak Republic, Spain, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, UK.</p> <p>Council of Europe, European Commission, EI, ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, UNESCO/CEPES, and ACA (associated)</p> <p>Bologna Secretariat</p> | <p><u>Timing:</u></p> <p>First meeting in November 2007</p> <p>Further meetings: January 2008, Spring 2008, Summer 2008 (if needed), Autumn 2008</p> <p>Depending on the progress of the work and the consultation process (via e-mail) in finalizing the report, a meeting will be scheduled at the end of 2008 or at the beginning of 2009.</p> <p><u>Reporting:</u></p> <p>Regular progress reports to BFUG. Minutes on Bologna website.</p> |
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| <p>Website for a global audience and with EUA regarding the Bologna Handbook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate with the Council of Europe, the European Commission and UNESCO as well as the ENIC/NARIC networks to enhance fair assessment of qualifications of other parts of the world on the basis of the LRC, • Liaise with the European Commission on EU initiatives and programmes on global promotion and cooperation, • Look for ways of integrating the "UNESCO /OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Education" into the activities of the working group, in particular by closely cooperating with ENQA on the seminar mentioned below. • All seminar organisers should consider inviting interested partners from other parts of the world. | | <p>Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009 Final report (final version): 1 March 2009</p> |
| Bologna Seminar on transnational education and the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for quality provision in cross-border HE | | |
| <p><u>Purpose:</u> To discuss the guidelines with representatives of other regions, with a view to achieving a consensus of purpose and method, thereby helping to create mutual confidence among quality assurance and accreditation agencies and other key stakeholder groups</p> <p><u>Liaison with other follow-up activities:</u> quality assurance</p> | <p><u>Organiser:</u> ENQA in cooperation with Council of Europe, ENIC-NARIC and UNESCO (Higher Education Division, Section of Access, Mobility and Quality Assurance).</p> <p><u>Participants:</u> Representatives from regional quality assurance networks (Asia-Pacific, South America, Africa, etc.).</p> | <p><u>Date:</u> Autumn 2008? <u>Place:</u> to be confirmed</p> |
| Related activities | | |
| <p><u>Network of Bologna Promoters:</u> based on national teams in all Bologna/Tempus countries that will be linked to a Virtual Community and will get European training by experts from their midst</p> | <p><u>Organiser:</u> European Commission</p> <p><u>Participants:</u> national teams of Bologna Promoters operating under the National Authorities (Ministry of Education / BFUG Delegate)</p> | |

DATA COLLECTION

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

3.4 We recognise the need to improve the availability of data on both mobility and the social dimension across all the countries participating in the Bologna Process. We therefore ask the European Commission (Eurostat), in conjunction with Eurostudent, to develop comparable and reliable indicators and data to measure progress towards the overall objective for the social dimension and student and staff mobility in all Bologna countries. Data in this field should cover participative equity in higher education as well as employability for graduates. This task should be carried out in conjunction with BFUG and a report should be submitted to our 2009 Ministerial conference.

General remarks

Eurostat and Eurostudent are preparing a work plan, outlining the work that needs to be done and how it will be organised, including a timetable and also specifying the role of the steering group (composition, tasks, interaction with BFUG etc.). In November, the European Commission will convene a first meeting of the steering group. Given that work on data collection is both technical and political in nature, this steering group will bring together experts from Eurostat, Eurostudent, Eurydice, and a number of BFUG members. Participation from non-EU countries is explicitly encouraged. At this meeting the exact work plan, the role of the steering group, and the role of the different partners involved will have to be specified and agreed. The focus in the period 2007-2009 will be on the social dimension, and in particular on participative equity and employability.

Steering group

Purpose:

- to endorse the indicators proposed by Eurostat and Eurostudent;
- to advise which contextual information is needed, which other parameters need to be taken into account;
- to comment on the analysis and the report to be produced

Liaison with other follow-up activities:
stocktaking, mobility, social dimension, employability

Chair: to be agreed among the participants

Participants: Eurostat, Eurostudent, Eurydice, a number of BFUG members (Luxembourg as former chair of the WG, also non-EU countries).

Expressed interest: UK, Italy, possibly Hungary, Russia and Switzerland, ESU, EUA, EURASHE

Timing:

First meeting: November 2007 (Brussels)

By spring 2008: define the indicators

Spring-autumn 2008: look at contextual information

Autumn 2008: writing the report

Reporting:

Regular progress reports to BFUG.

Minutes on Bologna website.

Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009

Final report (final version): 1 March 2009

STOCKTAKING

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

3.7 We ask BFUG to continue the stocktaking process, based on national reports, in time for our 2009 Ministerial conference. We expect further development of the qualitative analysis in stocktaking, particularly in relation to mobility, the Bologna Process in a global context and the social dimension. The fields covered by stocktaking should continue to include the degree system and employability of graduates, recognition of degrees and study periods and implementation of all aspects of quality assurance in line with the ESG. With a view to the development of more student-centred, outcome-based learning, the next exercise should also address in an integrated way national qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes and credits, lifelong learning, and the recognition of prior learning.

General remarks

As an overarching action line it is extremely important that all other follow-up activities feed into stocktaking, which should be kept in mind when scheduling those activities. Similarly, the timing of the stocktaking work should allow making maximum use of the results of other surveys like, for instance, the Eurydice Focus on Higher Education or the work of ESU and EUA. Moreover stocktaking should apply sound indicators and therefore work in close cooperation with the data collection working group.

Working group

Purpose: to continue stocktaking based on national reports.

To further develop the qualitative analysis, especially with regard to mobility, the Bologna Process in a global context and the social dimension.

Liaison with other follow-up activities: Input from all other follow-up activities needed, including the work on data collection.

Chair: Latvia

Participants: Armenia, Georgia, Italy, Romania, Turkey, UK/Scotland, ESU, EUA (Trends VI only in 2010), European Commission (Eurydice)

Timing and reporting:

Template for national reports and timeline to be approved at BFUG March 2008.

Regular progress reports to BFUG.

Minutes on Bologna website.

Final report (draft version): 15 January 2009

Final report (final version): 1 March 2009

BEYOND 2010

Relevant paragraph(s) in the London Communiqué

4.1 As the EHEA continues to develop and respond to the challenges of globalisation, we anticipate that the need for collaboration will continue beyond 2010.

4.2 We are determined to seize 2010, which will mark the passage from the Bologna Process to the EHEA, as an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to higher education as a key element in making our societies sustainable, at national as well as at European level. We will take 2010 as an opportunity to reformulate the vision that motivated us in setting the Bologna Process in motion in 1999 and to make the case for an EHEA underpinned by values and visions that go beyond issues of structures and tools. We undertake to make 2010 an opportunity to reset our higher education systems on a course that looks beyond the immediate issues and makes them fit to take up the challenges that will determine our future.

4.3 We ask BFUG as a whole to consider further how the EHEA might develop after 2010 and to report back to the next ministerial meeting in 2009. This should include proposals for appropriate support structures, bearing in mind that the current informal collaborative arrangements are working well and have brought about unprecedented change.

4.4 Building on previous stocktaking exercises, Trends, and Bologna With Student Eyes, we invite BFUG to consider for 2010 the preparation of a report including an independent assessment, in partnership with the consultative members, evaluating the overall progress of the Bologna Process across the EHEA since 1999.

General remarks

In the discussion on "Beyond 2010", it is important to distinguish the two reports requested by Ministers in the London Communiqué.

- (a) For 2009, BFUG is asked to produce a report on how the EHEA might develop after 2010 (including support structures).
- (b) For 2010, BFUG is asked to produce a report including an assessment on the overall progress of the Bologna Process since 1999. Although this independent Assessment is only due in 2010, preparations need to start already in this working period. For BFUG, the first priority should be to come to an agreement on the terms of reference of such an independent assessment.

At the same time, work needs to start on the 2009 report. Given that the discussion on "Beyond 2010" is such a sensitive issue, Ministers explicitly asked "BFUG as a whole" to consider the further developments. Since during regular BFUG meetings there might not be enough time for in-depth discussion, one or two extra BFUG meetings might be necessary to address the issue adequately.

It is clear that such a BFUG discussion needs careful preparation but a traditional working group might not be the appropriate form for this preparation, not least because probably almost all countries and organisations would like to be part of such a group. An alternative might be to make use of the Board, supported by the Bologna Secretariat.

In any case, it is crucial that the report on "Beyond 2010" is produced in an open and transparent process, involving all countries and organisations participating in the Bologna Process by way of regular consultations, be it electronically or at (special) BFUG meetings.

To take a wider view on the issue and to give room to new ideas, it is proposed to get input also from outside the "inner Bologna circle", using a combination of survey, publication and seminar(s).

| Consultation of experts and stakeholders | | |
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| <p>(1) <u>Survey by international academic experts</u> (2) <u>Publication of essays</u></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to identify the major challenges for the EHEA in the next decade and possibly to propose new action lines</p> | <p><u>Organiser:</u> Belgium / Flemish Community and Luxembourg in cooperation with host of the seminar and in consultation with BFUG</p> <p><u>Participants:</u> international experts in higher education (survey); other stakeholders: politicians, scholars, students and business representatives (publication)</p> | <p><u>Timing:</u> (1) Survey: October 2007 – March 2008 (2) Publication of essays: Mid-2008</p> |
| Seminar | | |
| <p><u>Purpose:</u> to discuss and validate the conclusions of the above-mentioned survey</p> | <p><u>Organiser:</u> Belgium / Flemish Community host of the conference in cooperation with</p> <p><u>Participants:</u> all countries and organisations participating in the Bologna Process</p> | <p><u>Date:</u> Late March 2008</p> <p><u>Place:</u> Organisers open to suggestions: one of the newer Bologna countries?</p> |
| Seminar or series of seminars organised by consultative members? | | |
| <p><u>Purpose:</u> to identify future challenges for the EHEA; to develop a common vision on the role of higher education beyond 2010.</p> | | |
| Electronic consultation | | |
| <p><u>Purpose:</u> to discuss and validate the conclusions of the above-mentioned seminars</p> | <p><u>Organiser:</u> Bologna Secretariat</p> <p><u>Participants:</u> all countries and organisations participating in the Bologna Process</p> | <p><u>Timing:</u> Results to be ready by 15 January 2009</p> |
| BFUG discussions | | |
| <p>“Beyond 2010” will be a regular item on the BFUG agenda. To allow for the necessary in-depth discussions, an extra day could be added to regular BFUG meetings and/or BFUG could decide to have a separate meeting entirely devoted to the Beyond 2010 issue, possibly with a different format (e.g. using a combination of workshops and joint sessions), possibly also linked to a conference on that topic.</p> | <p><u>Chair:</u> Respective Presidency (supported by the Bologna Secretariat)</p> <p><u>Participants:</u> all BFUG members</p> | |

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| Input for discussion at BFUG could be prepared by the Board. | | |
| Evaluation report / independent assessment | | |
| BFUG electronic consultation on terms of reference | <u>Chair</u> : Portuguese Presidency (supported by Bologna Secretariat) <u>Participants</u> : all BFUG members | <u>Timing</u> : Electronic consultation to be completed by 15 November 2007 Draft terms of reference to be ready by 1 December 2007 as input for the European Commission's call for proposal (as part of the LLL programme) in spring 2008 |
| Agreement on the terms of reference | <u>Chair</u> : Slovenian Presidency <u>Participants</u> : all BFUG members | <u>Timing</u> : BFUG meeting March 2008 |
| Steering of independent assessment by BFUG | <u>Chair</u> : subsequent Presidencies <u>Participants</u> : all BFUG members | <u>Timing</u> : 2008-2010 |

ANNEX 1: BFUG and Board meetings planned for the period 2007-2009

Please note: some dates are still provisional

| 2007 - Portuguese Presidency | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Board meeting | <u>Place</u> : Lisbon | <u>Date</u> : 30-31 August 2007 |
| BFUG meeting | <u>Place</u> : Lisbon | <u>Date</u> : 2-3 October 2007 |
| 2008 - Slovenian Presidency | | |
| Board meeting | <u>Place</u> : Ljubljana | <u>Date</u> : 16 January 2008 |
| BFUG meeting | <u>Place</u> : Ljubljana (close to the airport) | <u>Date</u> : 13-14 March 2008 |
| Board meeting | <u>Place</u> : Bled | <u>Date</u> : 9 June 2008 |
| 2008 - French Presidency | | |
| BFUG meeting | <u>Place</u> : Paris | <u>Date</u> : mid-September 2008 |
| 2009 - Czech Presidency | | |
| Board meeting (if required) | <u>Place</u> : Prague | <u>Date</u> : 13 January 2009 |
| BFUG meeting | <u>Place</u> : Prague | <u>Date</u> : 12-13 February 2009 |
| Board meeting (if required) | <u>Place</u> : Prague | <u>Date</u> : 10 March 2009 |
| BFUG meeting | <u>Place</u> : Prague | <u>Date</u> : 26-27 March 2009 |
| BFUG meeting | <u>Place</u> : Leuven | <u>Date</u> : 27 April 2009 |

BFUG might decide to have an additional meeting in 2008 entirely dedicated to the Beyond 2010 issue. Provided the respective EU Presidency agrees, this meeting could possibly be organised in one of the non-EU countries.

ANNEX 2: Timing of Bologna seminars 2007-2009

| 2007 - Portuguese Presidency | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFUG meeting • European QF Forum | |
| November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop on data collection and social dimension • Second European QA Forum | |
| December | | |
| 2008 - Slovenian Presidency | | |
| January | | Also planned for the first half of 2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar on the role of joint curricula in student mobility (Russia) • Possibly another European conference on qualifications frameworks |
| February | | |
| March | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFUG meeting • Conference on LLL (Slovenia) • Conference on Beyond 2010 | |
| April | | |
| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference on mobility (French Community of Belgium) | |
| June | | |
| 2008 - French Presidency | | |
| July | | Also planned for the second half of 2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third European QA Forum • Bologna seminar on transnational education and the UNESCO/OECD guidelines • European conference on qualifications frameworks |
| August | | |
| September | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFUG meeting | |
| October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar on doctoral candidates (Finland) • Conference on mobility (EI and ESU) | |
| November | | |
| December | | |

| 2009 - Czech Presidency | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| January | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bologna Seminar on ECTS (Russia and Malta) | Also planned in the first half of 2009: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly another European conference on qualifications frameworks |
| February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFUG meeting | |
| March | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFUG meeting | |
| April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFUG meeting • Ministerial meeting | |

Still to be scheduled:

- Seminar on staff mobility and pension arrangements (Germany)
- Seminar on learning outcomes (Portugal)
- Seminar(s) on employability
- Possible seminars organised by consultative members concerning Beyond 2010

ANNEX 3: Conventions (to be completed)